

Storm Drain Stenciling

Educate your community about stormwater pollution by stenciling the message: “No Dumping: Drains to River” on storm drains. You may choose to distribute or create fliers that educate the community about stormwater.

BACKGROUND

Why should people be concerned about what enters a storm drain?

Because anything that is flushed down a storm drain is not “treated” before it reaches a stream or river. This means that oil, antifreeze, paint, grass clippings, household waste, pet wastes, or any other waste on streets and sidewalks goes directly into a nearby stream, river, or lake. The next time you wash your car on your driveway, consider where the water goes.

Educate your community about stormwater pollution by stenciling storm drains and distributing door hanger cards.



OBJECTIVES

By participating in this activity, your group will:

1. Learn about the sources of stormwater pollution.
2. Understand why stormwater pollution is a threat to the environment.
3. Stencil messages on storm drains to encourage others to be more aware of stormwater pollution.

TIME

It will take approximately one hour for a team of four to six people to stencil 15 storm drains.

AGE

This is a good activity for volunteers ten years and older.

YOU WILL NEED: (for 4 to 6 people)

- ♦ 1 or 2 stencils
- ♦ Door hanger cards/fliers
- ♦ A map of the stenciling area
- ♦ A letter of authorization from Metro Water Services
- ♦ 2 cans of spray paint ~ 1 can paints approximately 10 drains
- ♦ A wire brush to clean the gutter before painting
- ♦ Whisk broom and dust pan
- ♦ 1 or 2 pairs of work gloves
- ♦ 1 or 2 safety vests or brightly colored clothing
- ♦ 2 garbage bags ~ 1 for wet stencils and 1 for garbage
- ♦ Paper towels or rags
- ♦ Traffic cones or flags for use on busy streets

- ◆ Duct tape and scissors

BEFORE YOU STENCIL

1. Obtain permission.

Get a letter of permission to stencil storm drains from Metro Water Services to provide you with proof if you are questioned by a road crew or police officer.

To stencil on private property, contact the landowner, whether the property is a home, business, or apartment complex.

2. Keep weather in mind.

You should choose a day when the pavement is dry and warm.

Windy days are not good because the spray paint can drift onto nearby automobiles and debris can be blown onto the painted surface.

3. Divide up the area.

Using a neighborhood map, carefully consider the area your group will stencil. Divide the area into routes and assign a team to each route.

4. Notify the neighborhood.

A day or two before you plan to paint, distribute door hanger cards or fliers explaining the stenciling program.

Door card hangers can be provided by Metro Water Services and a flier is included with your stencil kit (the flier can be photocopied). You may want to make your own door hangers, fliers, or posters, using the opportunity to conduct an all-out education campaign. These should be approved by Metro Water Services before distributing.

HOW TO STENCIL

1. Scrub around the drain.

Scrub the metal plate above the storm drain inlet with the wire brush, and use the whisk broom to sweep dirt into the dust pan. Use your garbage bags to take debris away. Do not sweep dirt and debris into the drain.

2. Put the stencil in place.

Position the stencil on the metal plate above the storm drain inlet where the message will be most visible. Tape or hold the stencil in place. You might place a cardboard box with its bottom removed over the stencil to create a “wall” for drifting paint.

3. Paint away.

Spray paint the message, making sure paint doesn't get into the storm drain. Two light coats of paint will work better than one heavy coat. Allow the first coat of paint to dry before applying the second coat.

4. Check for missed drains.

When you're done with the project, have one team member check that all storm drains in your area have been stenciled.

5. Clean up.

Place the used stencils in a plastic bag for transportation. When storing used stencils, allow the paint to dry *before* stacking the stencils. A stencil's lifespan is determined by use. Notify Metro Water Services if the message is blurred by excess paint build-up so the stencil can be replaced.

For more information please

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If you need any assistance or accommodation(s), please contact Mr. Joseph A. Estes 1600 2nd Avenue North, Nashville, TN. 37208/ 615-862-4862.